said four small houses, are in so ruinous a condition, that passengers are endangered thereby.

(Signed) WM. CRAWFORD STOW,
District Surveyor."

The overseers proceeded to shore up the houses (certainly very unscientifically), and thus the matter stood when placed in my hands. Several practical men had viewed the premises, and I called in three professional brethren of standing, who all completely confirmed me in the statement I then made in writing to Mr. Stow, that there was not the slightest appearance of crack, rent, or departure from original construction, that the walls were unusually upright, that all his allegations were untrue: and I complained that he had permitted us to proceed thus far without any comment, although he asserted he had watched the buildings during the whole of their progress. I also drew his attention to what had probably mislead him in imagining that there was a bulging. The work was perfectly upright to within about 4 feet of the eaves, when it receded inwards 1¼ inch, the party being bound by written agreement thus to conform his front to such previous irregularity in the front walls of the houses on each side. Mr. Stow, in place of seeking a conference or satisfying himself of his error, acknowledged the receipt of my letter, stating it was merely a difference of professional opinion. Notices of action were then served for trespass upon the overseers, who upon this, instead of pursuing *their intention of strictly enforcing the "powers and provisions"* of the Act, appealed to the referees for their advice, we having, previously to any appointment being made, served all parties with notice of our intention on a certain day, to direct the shores to be struck. We were met by one of the overseers, their solicitor, the sergeant, and a posse comitatus of the police, the solicitor strongly and somewhat offensively urging me not to act, and to abide the opinion of the referees, and not to hang upon them to the police-office, as I should not be heard, being no lawyer. The sergeant very properly stated he had no authority to act upon a question of civil rights unless a specific charge was given for an act he saw done. I then (feeling strong in the position), directed the shores to be struck, when my employer (most illegally) was instantly collared by the police, and we were all paraded to the station-house, where the charge was entered as an offence under the "Metropolitan Buildings Act" and thence proceeded to the Lambeth police-office, where the solicitor, finding he had no locus-standi under the Act quoted in the information, fell back upon the police Act, attempting to shew the shoring was an appendage, the property of the overseer. In despite of an attempt to prevent my being heard, the hon. Mr. Norton very courteously and attentively listened to my reasoning, that we complained of a trespass by the shores being placed on our property (hence no ground for asserting they were on the highway) and if an appendage, must be taken as part of that we were in undisturbed possession of, *viz.* the houses. Mr. Norton, taking the same view of the case, stated he could afford no relief, remarking that, with the exception of one other, it was the most unintelligible Act he had ever met with. I will now set out the grounds of complaint in Mr. Stow's report, and the facts in juxta position.

Charges alleged.	*Facts as they exist.*
1st. Admission of commencement before Jan. 1.	
2nd. That foundations consisted of an ill-constructed footing of Kentish rag, or rubble stone, in two courses all round (as footings), about 13 inches in height, from 10 to 12 in thickness, for which it did not appear any trenches had been dug or prepared.	Being in low ground, without any means of drainage, the prudent course had been adopted of merely levelling the ground, and using hard blocks of Kent rag, the lower course 1 foot 7 inches, by 6 inches deep, and another course 14 inches by 6 inches deep, on which the walls were constructed. In the presence of the referee, Mr. Stow admitted these were the dimensions all round the buildings.
3rd. That the external walls are built in one brick (Flemish bond), partly of new and partly of old bricks.	
4th. That the party-walls or party-partitions are built entirely of old materials, the greater portion being of place-bats and knobs of old bricks of inferior quality; chimney-breasts, jambs, and withs of somewhat better material; the pocket-pieces filled up with rubbish; chimney openings have no chimney-bars; one side of the party-wall has been carried up fair, and the other very rough,—both sides are now being rendered in cement, with a view to strengthen them.	In the presence of the referee, Mr. Stow was challenged to point out, and failed to do so, that the walls were built of bats and knobs; and it was offered, for the sake of argument, to assume they were entirely so,—he had no authority over construction. The pocket pieces, if the jambs and withs are sound, the openings being only 18 inches, required no chimney-bars, nor had the district-surveyor any authority.
5th. That the floors being composed of joists, in scantlings 6 inches by 2, in two lengths, one end having a bearing on front walls, and the other on the head of a slight quarter partition, the rafters, 4 by 2½, are no tie, the rafter having a bearing at one foot on the front walls, and at the other on the head of a slight quarter partition (more particularly shewn by a sketch subjoined), form but an imperfect tie to connect and secure the said walls.	The houses being of a very usual construction, the back rooms lower than the front, the joists had plates under the ends of each, with head and cill to well-framed 4-inch partition; the referee found each end of joists was spiked to plate, the front roof being a span roof, with rafters' feet notched and spiked to plate; with a ceiling joist spiked at each end to rafters; the referee asking for an admission of the correctness of the sketch alluded to, shewing the rafters' feet projecting some inches before the face of the wall, and having no connection with the plate, instructions were given to knock down the ceiling: the referee very carefully investigating it, found it to be as above described, and not the least similar to sketch.
6th. That the drainage of the said houses is confined to two large cesspools, steined dry in half a brick, and having no outlet or drain therefrom.	The attention of the referee was drawn to the fact, that in this locality (as it most disgracefully is in all others in this neighbourhood), there was no means of drainage except into filthy open ditches, without any fall towards them.
7th, and lastly. That by reason of the party-walls or party-partitions of the said houses being so insufficient of thickness as regards either security against accidents by fire or their own stability (being imperfectly connected with, and supported by, the front and back walls), and the said external walls being so improperly constructed as regards the tying and bonding together of the said walls with the party-walls, and with each other respectively,—	The referee having appointed a meeting, took an infinity of pains to plumb all the walls, which were evidenced as perfectly perpendicular (except the depression before alluded to), also to test the bonding of the party and external walls, and failed in his efforts to insert the point of a trowel at any point of junction. And the answer to every allegation was distinctly proved as above set out.

Then follows the certificate previously quoted.

After setting out the recital, and what had passed, the referees awarded:—"That the said buildings are not in so ruinous and dangerous a condition that passengers are endangered thereby, and that the aforesaid certificate of the said William Crawford Stow be reversed accordingly. And with regard to the costs and expenses attending the proceeding, we, the said official referees, defer the making any direction or appointment in respect thereof.—18th Sept. 1845."

I am, Sir, &c.

Peckham. GREENWAY ROBINS.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COLLATERAL INTELLIGENCE.

The Dome of Cologne Building Association. Committees' Address to H. M. Queen Victoria.—(Berlin, 1st November.)—The following is an extract from this document:—"This grand structure, which progresses under the especial patronage of our well-beloved King, and under the auspices of influential men from all ranks of the people, requires, on account of its gigantic size, the co-operation of all available forces—especially that of the King and other princes, which it has obtained up to this day. We feel very happy, that your Majesty, the sovereign of an empire where all grand enterprises are conceived and prosper, has been pleased to place yourself amongst the royal protectors of our work, and we beg to express to your Majesty our respectful acknowledgment for this act of generosity."

Proceedings of the "Académie des Sciences" (R.S.) of Paris.—(21st Oct.—3rd Nov.)—Mr. Arago spoke on the project of establishing another artesian well in the *Jardin des Plants*, whose tepid waters could be used for the hot-houses and other purposes. The expense of boring that of Grenelle has been nearly one million of francs, its depth being 546 metres. Allusion was made to the well of Mondorf (in Germany), whose depth is 671 metres, and which has been made at an expense of merely 75,000 francs. The temperature of the water issued from the latter is 34° Celsius.*—A newly-elected corresponding member, chemist Mr. Laurent, at Bourdeaux, has communicated a memoir, by which he endeavours to prove the utter fallacy of chemical science (!). He says: "There is a science, which is reckoned amongst the *exact* ones, whose object, however, is to examine bodies which do *not exist* at all—and this is chemistry. I shall prove this to be the case; nay, even, that chemistry attempts to teach the nature and qualities of bodies, whose existence is quite *impossible*."—Mr. Bourgois laid before the Academy his experiments to propel boats by (Archimedian) screws, moved by manual force, and stated the formulæ according to which they are to be constructed.—Mr. Morse laid before the Academy one of his new electro-telegraphic apparatus, which has been in operation for more than a year on the line between Washington and Baltimore. It is known, that the hitherto-used system of Mr. Wheatstone has this inconvenience, that the different signs which compose the communication *disappear*, after they have been read, which subjects them to misconstruction and mistake. The plan of Mr. Morse is to arm the moveable piece of iron with a pen or a *style*, placed above a slip of paper, which passes with uniform celerity between the cylinders of a *flutter*, brought into motion by the mechanism of a *jack*. By a procedure, the description of which does not fall within our scope, durable signs are deposited on the paper, which, under the form of points and lines differently combined, represent all possible chiffers and letters.—Observations, made by Messrs. Delarive, Erman, and Van Breda, on the nature of electric currents were then read, very near resembling the *important discovery* lately proclaimed by Professor Faraday in this metropolis.—Mr. Biot entertained the society with some details on the third volume of the new edition of his work on astronomy. Its novel features are a complete theoretical and practical analysis of the methods for determining the shape of the globe, and to solve great *geodesic* questions. Mr. Biot has, especially, much simplified the method for determining the levels for extensive geodesic operations, by reciprocal zenith distances.—Mr. Goudot, the Peruvian traveller, mentions a plant called *Arracacha*, growing under the same circumstances as the potato, and of equal nutritive character, likely by its acclimatisation to afford additional sustenance to our labouring classes.

Encaustic paintings in the hall of the Royal Palace of Munich.—These pictures, which we mentioned in a former number of THE BUILDER (p. 423), as being executed in a peculiar method of mural painting, have become now the more important, as this method has been just published by its discoverer, in a German work, entitled: "Encaustic Painting, dis-

* Our authorities should be reminded, that artesian wells would furnish all the warm water required for our new bathing and washing establishments, free of expense.

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